

Bahrain's Ambassador to the U.S. Discusses Bahrain's Recovery Plans at Brookings Institution, Places Bahrain's Unrest in Historical Perspective

WASHINGTON D.C. (April 14, 2011)- The Kingdom of Bahrain's Ambassador to the United States Houda Nonoo addressed an intimate group of foreign policy and national security scholars as part of The Brookings Institution's seminar, "Inside the Middle East: Security, Political, and Social Dynamics." Ambassador Nonoo discussed events in Bahrain as part of a talk titled, "The Future of the Arab Revolutions in the Gulf States: The View From Bahrain." Ambassador Nonoo highlighted the ongoing reforms taking place in Bahrain.

Putting the unrest in Bahrain into perspective, Ambassador Nonoo remarked on the strong track record of reforms the government has taken since 1999 when His Majesty King Hamad acceded to the throne in Bahrain. "Political prisoners and religious leaders were pardoned and released," and "The State Security Court, which had permitted the government to detain individuals without trial for up to three years, was abolished."

Referencing Bahrain's maturing democracy, Ambassador Nonoo detailed that with King Hamad's rule, "Bahrain saw the introduction of a new constitutional framework; a more open, participatory and representative political system with an elected Parliament." The King's agenda also included "deep rooted economic reforms aimed at doubling the household income for all Bahrainis" and introducing "unemployment benefits and the protection of a wide range of individual and collective rights" which guaranteed equality for all citizens.

Describing the development of the protests, Ambassador Nonoo said that peaceful demonstrations spiralled into acts of violence and that the original calls for reform became a sequence of destructive extremist acts. She noted that, "protests spread into schools, hospitals and communities," and all the while, opposition groups refused to join the government in a collaborative dialogue to achieve a legally binding referendum for peace and reform.

After protesters forced the closure of Bahrain's Financial Harbor, the government called on the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) Peninsula Shield Force to bolster infrastructure. Ambassador Nonoo said, "The anarchy we saw left our police forces overstretched. We called in Gulf Cooperation Council support to help maintain Bahrain's security and stability. There was no other option."

Ambassador Nonoo concluded, "A political solution is within everyone's interest, so that significant further reform can be achieved, and with it, a stable, political settlement for Bahrain...But, this can only be done in a stable and secure environment where all of Bahrain's communities feel safe."

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Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United States

Contact: Art Swift

(202) 744-9045

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.
Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Political parties Not Being Dissolved, Says Foreign Minister

Manama, April 15, 2011 -- Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa said today that reports of the dissolution of political societies in the island kingdom are incorrect. Al Wefaq party members resigned from their parliamentary seats several weeks ago and elections will be held to fill those seats, the Foreign Minister said.

Sheikh Khalid clarified the matter on his official Twitter feed:

"Bahrain is not seeking to dissolve political societies, official statement was incorrect," Sheikh Khalid wrote. "It's a court case against violations committed by the societies. In accordance with the constitution, elections will be held to fill seats vacated by Alwefaq. All societies, including Alwefaq are encouraged to participate in elections and serve the people through parliament."

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Contact: Art Swift

(202) 744-9045

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Bahrain King: We're open for business

MANAMA—April 21, 2011—Bahrain's King Hamad called for more United States involvement in the country's education sector and in jobs creation.

"The rationale is simple: The prerequisite to better paying jobs is a world-class education," he said.

King Hamad bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa's opinion editorial in the Washington Times Tuesday welcomed U.S. participation in Bahrain's development.

"An integral element of any support for Bahrain should be a scholarship program for Bahrainis from all walks of life to obtain their undergraduate and graduate degrees in the United States," he said.

The king also emphasized the need for U.S. assistance with training new recruits for Bahrain's police force and army. In the article, he proposed a joint U.S.-GCC training effort to fund the program and get it underway.

"When I was a student at the Army War College in Ft. Leavenworth, Kan., it was very clear to me that the American experience was a model well worth emulating," he said. "The events that have unfolded since February offer new opportunities for both of our countries."

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Sources: Washington Times, Gulf Daily News

Contact: Rose Sager

(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Bahrain's Minister of Finance Stresses Improvements

Washington, April 22 -- Bahrain's Minister of Finance, Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohamed Al-Khalifa, said this week that Bahrain is on the mend as it continues to make economic strides in the wake of recent protests.

In a speech at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Al-Khalifa noted that in the last decade Bahrain has pursued a reformist agenda, including a referendum on the constitution, the establishment of a bicameral parliament, and the separation of executive, judicial, and legislative powers. Al-Khalifa cited 67.7% voter turnout in the last election as an indication of popular participation in and enthusiasm for Bahraini politics. Al-Khalifa also mentioned that the bicameral parliament allows representation and participation of minorities, women, and professional groups, thus creating a necessary balance.

In reference to recent unrest and protests in Bahrain, Al-Khalifa recalled that on February 19 the crown prince ordered the immediate withdrawal of the military from Manama's Pearl Roundabout -- which has been at the center of recent anti-government protests -- and called for peaceful dialogue with the opposition. The minister stated that accurate media coverage would show that a majority of Bahrainis actually demonstrated in support of the government.

Turning to economic improvements, Al-Khalifa noted that Bahrain invests heavily into its society. He stressed that the Economic Development Board, which oversees the budgetary cycle, has put forth the Vision 2030 plan, a blueprint for Bahrain's long-term economic development. He highlighted that Bahrain's unemployment rate is only 3.6 percent and that 80 percent of the Bahraini budget comes from oil revenues, allowing the government to provide universal healthcare and education.

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Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Art Swift

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Acting Health Minister Confirms Bahraini Hospitals Functioning Normally

MANAMA, April 12 – In a press conference at the Information Affairs Authority yesterday, Social Development Minister and Acting Health Minister Dr. Fatima Al Balushi stressed that medical centers are operating normally and emphasized the need for restored public confidence in the sector.

"Unquestionably, trust in our health service, for all who require it, is a pre-requisite for continuity and reliability of service," Dr. Al Balushi said. "We have never spared any effort to provide the best possible service to citizens and residents in Bahrain."

As a precautionary step, the ministry suspended several staff that appeared to have violated regulations and state laws over the past few months while the ministry investigates the matter, she said. However, Salmaniya Medical Complex's volume of work and level of patients remain normal and investigations have not interfered with medical treatment.

"All citizens and residents can take advantage of these services without discrimination," she said. "I can assure you all that all medical staff and Ministry staff will at all times provide a professional service, based on principles of humanity, honesty, sincerity, dedication and professionalism."

Presented with challenges from recent unrest, the health ministry refocused by working collectively, remaining true to its mission and ensuring lessons were learned. Currently, the industry is resuming planned medical expansions, which had been previously postponed.

"Recent events in Bahrain have taught us as a Ministry many lessons and, I believe, given the Ministry the strength and resilience to provide an even stronger service to those in need of health care in Bahrain," she said.

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Source: Bahrain News Agency

Contact: Rose Sager

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Bahrain's Ambassador to the U.S.: Reforms and Progress Will Continue

MANAMA, April 13—With a situation different from other countries experiencing unrest in the Middle East, Bahrain faces more complex and time-consuming solutions, Bahraini Ambassador to the U.S., Houda Nonoo writes in an editorial published yesterday in "The Hill."

"After eight weeks of unrest in Bahrain, one thing has become abundantly clear: Bahrain's situation is much more complicated than that of other Arab countries that have experienced mass demonstrations recently, and that is why there are no simple solutions," she writes.

While unrest in other countries has been determined by a united front, no common thread unites Bahrain's opposition, such as a lack of representation in the parliament, she writes. The government has continually pressed for a National Dialogue so that "everything is on the table," only to be refused by the opposition parties who insist on preconditions that will limit the discussion, according to Ambassador Nonoo.

"I am confident that as the protestors see life returning to normal in Bahrain - banks have reopened, students have returned to class and traffic is flowing again - that they will come to the table to make Bahrain stronger than ever," she said.

A state of reform is not new to the country. Since 2002 Bahrain has worked to build democracy and reforms, establishing a constitutional monarchy, electing a parliament, and creating municipal councils. The country is currently a young democracy and while the pace of reforms may not be as quick as desired, they are "genuine and permanent," the Ambassador says.

"Our greatest aspiration is for all of our citizens to believe that their government represents them—that they can realize their ambitions and gain redress for their grievances as Bahraini citizens equal before the law," she writes.

As Bahrain looks to the future, the country will continue to prize its relationship with the United States and value the association with "the world's greatest democracy."

"Our relationship with the United States is one of our most important, and we believe that it must be based not only on shared security interests, but also on shared values and aspirations," she writes. "Our emerging democracy may never look like American democracy, but the United States is our great example as we fashion our own system."

Ultimately, Bahrain's long tradition of tolerance and moderation will pull the country through this difficult time, Ambassador Nonoo writes.

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Source: The Hill

Contact: Rose Sager

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This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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Bahrain Lessens Nightly Curfew in Capital

MANAMA, March 23 -- Bahrain said today it is easing the curfew here, amidst an improving security situation.

The General Command of the Bahrain Defence Force announced that the curfew hours for select areas in the capital city of Manama were being cut to just six hours, from 10 am to 4 pm.

Bahrain's military rulers originally imposed a 12 hour curfew which was cut to eight hours last week.

Now the curfew will run just six hours until further notice, the statement said. It added that the reason for the relaxation of the curfew was "due to the improvement in security situation in the mentioned area."

Bahrain declared a state of national security on March 15 after troops from Saudi Arabia and the UAE arrived to help subdue protests that have gripped the Gulf state since mid-February.

Bahrain's Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa said on Monday that his country would emerge stronger from the uprisings.

He said the kingdom would "overcome the current circumstance" thanks to the wise leadership of King Hamad as well as the "resolve and patriotism of the Bahraini people".

"The kingdom will emerge stronger and more determined," he said in comments published by state news agency BNA.

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Source: Arabian Business.com

Contact: Rose Sager

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This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Gulf Daily News Clarifies Bahrain's State of National Safety, Says Current Security Level is a "Step Down" from Martial Law

MANAMA (March 28, 2011) - The current state of national safety is the "lesser of two emergencies," according to Gulf Daily News. In the article "State of National Safety 'lesser of two emergencies'" published on March 28, Gulf Daily News interviewed Farced Ghazi, a former member of Bahrain's parliament who explains the implications of the security measure.

The current security level, called for by His Majesty King Hamad, can last up to three months from the day it is declared. Should the Kingdom exhibit a return to normalcy the security measure can also be ended prematurely, and conversely extended if the state of emergency continues after the allotted three months.

Gulf Daily News asserted, "The State of National Safety is a step down from declaring Martial Law, in which both the constitution and all national legislation can be suspended while the military runs the country."

Bahraini lawyer and former Member of Parliament Farced Ghazi notes that the constitution and national legislation are not subject to suspension under the state of emergency. "Everything goes on normally in the country, except the rule of law comes under the military ruler," said Mr. Gahazi.

Mr. Ghazi explains the dynamic between Bahrain's two branches of power during states of national safety and says the executive and judiciary branches, "function as normal without their authority being turned over to the military, which can order those powers to take whatever steps necessary to ensure safety."

The specific security level elevates the power of the ruler who can "order arrests without getting warrants from the Public Prosecution" says Mr. Ghazi, noting that responding to threats towards people and property "requires fast action."

Gulf Daily News explains, "Under the current State of National Safety, BDF Commander-in-Chief Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa has been delegated by His Majesty to take steps to protect people's safety and national security."

Mr. Ghazi concludes that the legislature, "which includes parliament and the Shura Council, was not affected under a State of National Safety."

Source: Gulf Daily News

Contact: Rose Sager

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Bahrain Prime Minister Proposes Several Large Government-Funded Development Projects

MANAMA, March 31 -- His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa yesterday announced a series of mega building projects may be forthcoming.

The Prime Minister said he has commissioned feasibility studies for a number of projects to bolster the nation's infrastructure and return the country to economic prosperity.

"The huge development schemes are aimed at re-energizing the national economy and ensuring it more edge," he said.

He instructed concerned authorities to suggest a list of such projects along with their estimated costs and deadlines.

"The priority should be put first and foremost on housing and infrastructure," the Prime Minister said during a work meeting.

This initiative is part of a series of proposals by the government to return Bahrain to normalcy. Earlier this month the Crown Prince called on all opposition groups to enter a National Dialogue and explore ways to foster reform in Bahrain.

In other developments, the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) has been instructed to provide more help to businesses in overcoming negative repercussions resulting from the unrest.

The Prime Minister directed CBB officials to co-ordinate extra measures with banks and financial institutions to help the private sector regain its pivotal role as a driving force of the national economy.

"The government is working hard for the economy to emerge stronger and surmount any negative repercussions," he said.

Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United States

Contact: Art Swift

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This has been issued by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Bahraini Medical Complex Reports Missing Medicine, Suspects Foul Play to Fabricate Violence During Protests

MANAMA (April 5, 2011) - Gulf Daily News reports that a large stash of medical supplies from Bahrain's Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) has gone missing. The Medical Complex had been used as an operations center for the political opposition groups during the recent protests.

According to the recent Gulf Daily News report, "More than 5,000 vials of drugs and other medicine went missing from Bahrain's main hospital during a siege by anti-government protesters."

During the protester's siege, the medical complex was one of many places affected. Protesters also blocked off major highways and government buildings and caused the shutdown of Bahrain's financial harbor.

The publication notes that the drugs and other medicine "were allegedly taken from Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) by demonstrators who used them to simulate the symptoms of exposure to nerve gas."

Health Ministry Arab Board training coordinator Dr Nabeel Ansari said that certain individuals utilized the pharmaceuticals to fabricate violence. "Patients took the drugs so they could claim the chemical agent was being used by Bahrain's security forces," Dr. Ansari said.

According to an accident and emergency department consultant at the Salmaniya Medical Complex, the medical heist was part of a opposition campaign aimed at distributing falsified information about events on the ground in Bahrain to the international media.

Source: Gulf Daily News

Contact: Rose Sager

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This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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Bahrain's Ambassador to the United States Discusses Current State of the Kingdom, Indicates Internal Progress

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 6, 2011) – The Kingdom of Bahrain's Ambassador to the United States Houda Nonoo spoke today with the Women Ambassadors Foundation at Howard University to discuss Bahrain's progress and return to normalcy since a period of recent unrest in the country.

Ambassador Nonoo indicated that progress was being made in Bahrain and noted that her nation is "definitely on the mend." She detailed that, "Financial centers have reopened, including banks and the stock market" and that "Students have returned to school and traffic is flowing again."

In an effort to spearhead democratic reforms, Bahrain's Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has asked parties in Bahrain to take part in a national dialogue. Ambassador Nonoo remarked, "We need this dialogue to take us to the next level of democratic accomplishment. So far, the opposition forces have not been willing to come to the table and talk about their grievances."

Ambassador Nonoo concluded, "I am honored to represent such a beautiful nation with a high standard of living. We have work to do, but we are on a path of democracy and our goals are clear."

FULL TEXT OF SPEECH:

Speech to Women Ambassadors Foundation at Howard University
Ambassador Houda Nonoo
6 April 2011

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I am truly pleased to be here this morning. I would like to thank Dr. Marilyn Sephocke, president of the Women Ambassadors Foundation, for her gracious invitation. I am honored to be in the presence of so many esteemed ambassadors today. Thank you, ladies.

I would also like to thank James Wyche, provost of the University, for his warm hospitality here at Howard.

I am proud to be Bahrain's ambassador to the United States, a position I have held since July 2008. Prior to engaging in public service, I ran a business with my husband. In 2004 I was a founding member of a human rights society and was elected as its Secretary General. I was then appointed to the Upper House of Parliament, before becoming

Ambassador to the United States, Canada, Brazil and Mexico. And I'm still waiting to present my credentials in Argentina!

Being an Ambassador has been a rewarding job, which has allowed me to meet with fascinating and stimulating people. It's never contained a moment of boredom. My primary duties as ambassador consist of representing the Kingdom of Bahrain in the United States and other countries. This includes meeting with elected officials on Capitol Hill to discuss bilateral relations, telling the story of Bahrain through speeches such as this one and hosting events to promote the kingdom as a center of commerce and industry in the Arabian Gulf.

Bahrain is a unique country in that it is home to Bahraini Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Jews and Ba'hais. And our places of worship stand next to each other. I myself am from the Jewish community. So not only does Bahrain have a female ambassador, but we also have a female Jewish ambassador. The first one in the Arab world!

As you most likely know, Bahrain is undergoing a period of change at the present time. Since February 14, we have been experiencing upheaval, started by a small group of young people who were trying to emulate what was happening in other Arab countries. This demonstration was soon taken over by people with a different agenda. Sadly, this group does not represent the majority of the country or anything close to it.

The good news is that Bahrain is slowly returning to normal. Financial centers have reopened, including banks and the stock market. Businesses have started functioning. Students have returned to school and traffic is flowing again. Shoppers are at the malls. Bahrain is definitely on the mend.

Our crown prince has asked all parties in Bahrain to participate in a national dialogue to explore future reforms, without any preconditions. Bahrain is a young democracy that is a work in progress. We need this dialogue to take us to the next level of democratic accomplishment. So far, the opposition forces have not been willing to come to the table and talk about their grievances. This is unfortunate, as we need all Bahrainis to propel this country ahead this decade.

As our country moves forward, I am quite hopeful that we will continue our tradition of being one of the most progressive societies in the Arab world. Women, for example, have always had their rights in Bahrain. We have women parliamentarians, ministers, undersecretaries, bank managers, teachers and even taxi drivers! It is a great time for women in our island nation.

During my time here, it has always been exciting to be Ambassador to the United States because the U.S. and Bahrain have historically enjoyed very close ties. We are home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet. Thousands of U.S. military personnel have lived in Bahrain and thoroughly enjoyed their experience. These men and women are actually the best ambassadors Bahrain could ever have, as they promote our nation wherever they go.

Although I know there are many challenges ahead, Bahrain is undergoing an evolution rather than a revolution.

I am honored to represent such a beautiful nation with a high standard of living. We have work to do, but we are on a path of democracy and our goals are clear. Thank you ladies and gentlemen. Please enjoy the rest of today's presentations.

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This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. More information is available at the United States Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Bahraini Businessmen Detail Improving Situation at Home

Washington, April 6 – The situation on the ground in Bahrain is improving, according to two Bahraini businessmen in an interview with Al-Sahafa, an Arab-American newspaper.

In “Unveiling the Truth: Eye Witnesses Describing the Situation in Bahrain from a Business Perspective,” Khalid Al Ameen, board member for the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Jehad Amin, managing director of House of Travel in Bahrain, discuss the current state of Bahrain and what the unrest and recovery mean for the island kingdom moving forward.

“The government and the King are doing a beautiful job,” Al Ameen said. “They have instituted reforms. These reforms included education, health reform, and economic reforms ... Bahrain is operating well, Bahrain is safe, and Bahrain is peaceful.”

Jehad Amin chronicled how the protests upended Bahrain for a brief while. “The protests have disrupted everything,” Amin said. “They have blocked streets, stopped people from going to school and made people go on strike. But Bahrain is on the mend and will be stronger than ever.”

The businessmen discussed how the Crown Prince has now received proposals to increase infrastructure development in the country and to propel the economy further in the wake of the unrest. They also mentioned how the Crown Prince has called all sides to the table to negotiate a lasting peace and greater reforms for the country.

Full text of the article may be found at <http://al-sahafa.us/images/AlsahafaNewspaperApril2011.pdf>

Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Art Swift

(202) 683-3108

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Additional information is available from the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.

Bahraini Crown Prince Advocates National Unity as Building Block for Bahrain's Future

MANAMA, April 8 – National unity will lead Bahrain out of its current unrest, Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa said yesterday in an address to the nation. In the speech broadcast on Bahrain Television, the Crown Prince called for unity so that the country can move forward with reforms and building a better future through modernization and development.

"Today, we must embed the concept of respect for the rule of law and co-existence. We must affirm the concept of justice and the value of working together towards development and progress and away from division and extremism," Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa said.

According to the Crown Prince, division threatens stability and progress while also impinging on the government's ability to effectively implement reforms. Although the work of constitutional institutions has previously been obstructed, they will continue to participate in King Hamad's reform project, he said.

"At this time, we must emphasize the established principles that all of us believe and have attained from the reform project... I will not spare any effort in participating, as honored and assigned by His Majesty the King, to the progress of this reform," he said.

The Crown Prince thanked the Bahrain Defence Force, the police and the National Guard for reinstating security and ensuring the safety of all citizens today and also expressed confidence in the nation's future.

"The future is bright for all of us and opportunities are there for all. It is based on this principle that we must move forward – it is the rock upon which we build the future of our country and future generations."

The full speech can be seen [here](#).

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Source: Bahrain News Agency

Contact: Rose Sager

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This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Additional information is available from the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Bahraini Blogger: Crown Prince Deserves Praise

Manama, April 11 – In response to the Crown Prince's address to the nation about the need for national unity, prominent Bahraini blogger Suhail Ghazi Algosaibi has published "An Open Letter to HRH The Crown Prince: A Letter from a Fan." The letter details Algosaibi's passion for reform and restoration in Bahrain. Full text of the letter is as follows:

"Your Royal Highness,

Thank you for your recent appearance on television. So many of us have been waiting for you to reappear, and to lead the healing process.

I applaud your efforts in trying to bring a resolution to the February 14th crisis, which has left a deep wound in our society. Despite the opposition's arrogance, you've persisted in trying to bring a win-win resolution to the crisis. God bless you. In the end they've shown their true colours, and *no one* can fault you for your efforts.

We are so proud of you.

Your Royal Highness, sectarianism and hate have ripped through this beautiful country. The social damage it has done is far more severe than the political damage. It has affected friendships and families. For the first time people are asking what sect someone comes from before doing business with them. There is so much work that needs to be done, so much pain that needs to be nursed.

But God willing we will overcome this. I know it will be hard, but I also know that doing the right thing is never easy. United we can make Bahrain stronger than it ever was.

Your Royal Highness, I'm sure you've been getting lots of advice, --- and I don't know if you're in the mood to hear anymore --- but allow me to add my on humble thoughts.

The messages of hate and sectarianism that came from some of the opposition leaders found a fertile ground. The government, and indeed the Bahraini society as a whole, must ask itself why we have so many young men and women in our society that have nothing to lose? We have to ask ourselves why does a section of our society feel victimised and so ready to hate?

It is my humble contention that we must remove all causes for hate so that we never have to experience such a crisis again.

Thank you again for all your efforts during this crisis. I cannot imagine how painful it must have been for you. Your wisdom, patience and resilience during this crisis were nothing short of remarkable.

I for one am not surprised by your unique character...

For you are your father's son.

God bless Bahrain.

Yours,

Suhail Ghazi Algosaibi.”

Full text of the letter may be found at Suhail Algosaibi's Radical Dojo .

SOURCE: Suhail Algosaibi's Radical Dojo

Contact: Rose Sager

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Additional information is available from the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.



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Bahrain Reiterates Support for Fight Against Terrorism

Manama, May 3, 2011 —Bahrain News Agency reported today that the Kingdom of Bahrain has expressed its full support for efforts to end terrorism in light of the death of Osama bin Laden.

The Foreign Affairs Ministry said in a statement that terrorism has affected many nations in the Arab world, particularly Saudi Arabia. The statement continued that Saudi has been the target of several attacks aimed at undermining security and stability. These attacks have been intended to spread fear, in addition to taking the lives of innocent people.

The Kingdom said it also hoped that the death of Osama bin Laden would provide an opportunity to mobilize international efforts to find appropriate solutions to eliminate terrorism and to stop those behind the misguided ideology.

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Source: Bahrain News Agency

Contact: Art Swift

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Bahrain Relaxes Curfew on Land and Sea

Manama, May 4, 2011 – In a sign of improving security, The General Command of the Bahrain Defence (BDF) announced today that it has reduced curfew hours in the capital city, Bahrain News Agency reports.

According to a statement issued today, the new curfew, which will be effective starting Thursday, May 5th, covers a busy section of Manama and will be imposed from midnight to 4 a.m. This curfew had previously been six hours, from 10 pm to 4 am.

In a separate statement, the BDF General Command also eased curfew on the sea. Sea activities will be prohibited from 6 p.m. to 4 a.m, starting from Wednesday, May 4th. The curfew had originally been 13 hours, from 5 p.m to 6 a.m.

The reduction of curfews is a sign that the unrest since February is quieting down, officials said. Since March, tourists have been returning to Bahrain, businesses have reopened and students are attending class in full.

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Source: Bahrain News Agency

Contact: Art Swift

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This has been issued by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Additional information is available from the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Bahrainis Launch Social Media Campaign to Show Support for King

Manama, May 5, 2011 – A new, one-week social media campaign has been launched to show support for His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. Utilizing Twitter, Facebook, instant messaging, blogs and websites, the campaign titled "We Are All Hamad" is meant to demonstrate fidelity and gratitude.

"The campaign was the brainchild of loyal Bahrain citizens who wanted to express sincere thanks, appreciation and gratitude to HM King Hamad and his wise leadership," media figure Maysa Yusef told the Bahrain News Agency, asserting that "this is the least we can do to thank HM King Hamad, who has always, through his wisdom and statesmanship, met the aspirations of Bahraini citizens and made their dreams come true."

Maysa Yusef also indicated that the campaign is already a huge success, especially on Twitter and Blackberry Messenger, as more than 10,000 citizens changed their photos to HM the King's even before the launch of the campaign. She also said that a special Facebook page will be dedicated to enabling Bahrainis to express their allegiance and love to HM King Hamad.

On her part, youth activist Abeer Siwar called upon citizens, residents, government bodies, NGOs, schools and universities to foster national unity and come up with similar initiatives to show the world that Bahrain is stronger and more cohesive under the King's leadership.

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Source: Bahrain News Agency

Contact: Art Swift

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This was issued by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Additional information is available from the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.

Bahrain's King Announces End to State of "National Safety" in June

Manama, May 9, 2011 -- King Hamad of Bahrain announced his country's state of "national safety" will end June 1.

The national safety law, often erroneously referred to as a "state of emergency" or "martial law," was enacted in mid-March to deal with rising violence from demonstrators in Bahrain.

The announcement is a sign that Bahrain has rebounded from the unrest, with banks reopened, students back in school and tourism returning to the island Kingdom.

Curfews in the capital city of Manama and on sea were also reduced last week as protests have dwindled. Bahrain has called for a national dialogue to resolve issues with opposition forces and many Bahrainis believe ending the state of national safety will greatly advance this goal.

The Bahrain Grand Prix, originally scheduled for March 13 and a source of a big government investment, was postponed because of the unrest.

Formula One's governing body said last week that Bahrain had until June 3 to decide if a new date could be set for this year. If Bahrain does plan to go ahead with the race, that would help explain the lifting of the state of national safety on June 1 rather than June 15 as originally planned, several Bahrainis said.

####

Contact: Art Swift

(202) 744-9045

This was issued by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Further information may be found at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Bahraini Member of Parliament: The Justice System is Working

Washington, May 9, 2011 – The court system in Bahrain is working and justice is being served, said a Bahraini Member of Parliament visiting Washington this past week.

“We have a high level of justice in Bahrain, as demonstrated by the most recent trial of protesters,” said Isa AbdulJabbar AlKooheji, Member of Parliament. “The court system is transparent and weighs the evidence carefully.”

AlKooheji referred to the court outcome last Friday when a Bahraini national safety court sentenced one man to at least five years in jail and acquitted a second over an alleged attempt to kill policemen during the country's recent political unrest.

“It is unfair that the media is saying that due process is not occurring in Bahrain,” he added. “It is a wild misstatement to say that everyone tried is being convicted, as some have written. Actually over 300 people have been... arrested, interrogated, and they didn’t find anything and they let them go.”

AlKooheji dispelled the myth that those recently arrested in Bahrain are being tried by military tribunals.

“That’s absolutely false,” AlKooheji said. “There is one military judge, two civilian judges, sitting on the panel, and every man who’s being accused has the right to a lawyer. The lawyer is present and family members are present in the court. I don’t know why people are saying that it’s a military court because that’s not true at all.”

The Parliamentarian said that Bahrain is on the mend and the nation is a work in progress.

“It takes awhile for any democratic country, and especially Bahrain being such a young democratic country,” AlKooheji said. “It takes awhile for people to understand the true meaning of democracy. If you ask a group of people in one room what is the definition of democracy, they might give you the definition, but the understanding of it could differ from a person to another.”

Al Kooheji said that in the months to come he expects greater consensus to emerge among all Bahrainis.

####

Source: Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Art Swift

(202) 744-9045

This has been issued by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Additional information may be found from the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Bahrain's Embassy in the U.S. Responds to the Islamic Information Center Hearing on the Situation in Bahrain

WASHINGTON D.C. (May 12, 2011) - The Kingdom of Bahrain's Embassy in the U.S. recognizes the concerns of the Islamic Information Center but disagrees with the grievances aired in the commission's hearing on April 25.

This statement corrects a press release issued April 26 which incorrectly identified the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission as holding the hearing. The Embassy of Bahrain regrets the earlier error.

Bahrain is a progressive Arab nation and a longtime ally of the United States. Historically, Bahrain has been at the forefront of ensuring civil liberties and democratic reforms in the Middle East. Bahrain respects and protects all religions and ethnic groups.

The political unrest exhibited in Bahrain was characterized by violent sectarianism. Bahrain's situation is unique from our neighbors in the greater region like Syria, Libya, and Egypt and it is wrong for the commission to treat the situation in Bahrain as indistinguishable. Actions in response to the protests went to stabilize the duress in our country and preserve our multicultural, multi-ethnic society.

The protesters did not use peaceful tactics and during the height of unrest, protesters overran our main thoroughfare and threatened our infrastructure. Bahrain was under siege and any sense of normal life was brought to a halt. Schools, businesses and ministries could not operate. The financial harbor was temporarily shut down due to road blocks and the main hospital was transformed into an opposition political command center.

Bahrain's protests had turned violent and the government was forced to respond. In order to bolster security at our critical infrastructure and to maintain national stability, Bahrain called on our regional neighbors. The nation exercised its sovereign right to invite in the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) Peninsula Shield Force to aid in our peacekeeping efforts.

This was not an act of external force or a foreign invasion. This was a necessary step to ensure Bahrain return to a state of normalcy. Since then, Bahrain's hospitals, schools, banks and shopping centers have opened for the public and we continue to make strides to resume normal life.

The Islamic Information Center also made note that the Bahraini government has targeted and removed religious buildings and shrines in this time of duress. The government has not targeted specific sites. These buildings are makeshift, illegal constructions and the government has continually made sure that places of worship adhere to national regulations.

Bahrain's unflinching commitment to human rights was demonstrated by Bahrain's Crown Prince's proposed national dialogue. This effort went to make progress on meaningful democratic reforms for all Bahraini people. The national dialogue had no

ceiling to the change and reforms it could have yielded. That offer went unanswered for well over one month while violent protests continued. Opposition groups refused to engage in talks and demanded that the government meet preconditions before a national dialogue began.

The Embassy appreciates the concern of the Islamic Information Center. Bahrain is committed to a long lasting national unity between all Bahraini people and we will continue our work to find peace and to ensure human rights are enjoyed by all Bahrainis. The government of Bahrain regrets the loss of any life, regardless of religious sect or ethnicity, and we know we have a long road ahead of us. The government will work with all Bahrainis to strike a balance in peace and to achieve enduring equality.

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This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. More information is available at the United States Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

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Bahrain's Ambassador to the U.S. Discusses Bahrain's Recovery Plans at Brookings Institution, Places Bahrain's Unrest in Historical Perspective

WASHINGTON D.C. (April 14, 2011)- The Kingdom of Bahrain's Ambassador to the United States Houda Nonoo addressed an intimate group of foreign policy and national security scholars as part of The Brookings Institution's seminar, "Inside the Middle East: Security, Political, and Social Dynamics." Ambassador Nonoo discussed events in Bahrain as part of a talk titled, "The Future of the Arab Revolutions in the Gulf States: The View From Bahrain." Ambassador Nonoo highlighted the ongoing reforms taking place in Bahrain.

Putting the unrest in Bahrain into perspective, Ambassador Nonoo remarked on the strong track record of reforms the government has taken since 1999 when His Majesty King Hamad acceded to the throne in Bahrain. "Political prisoners and religious leaders were pardoned and released," and "The State Security Court, which had permitted the government to detain individuals without trial for up to three years, was abolished."

Referencing Bahrain's maturing democracy, Ambassador Nonoo detailed that with King Hamad's rule, "Bahrain saw the introduction of a new constitutional framework; a more open, participatory and representative political system with an elected Parliament." The King's agenda also included "deep rooted economic reforms aimed at doubling the household income for all Bahrainis" and introducing "unemployment benefits and the protection of a wide range of individual and collective rights" which guaranteed equality for all citizens.

Describing the development of the protests, Ambassador Nonoo said that peaceful demonstrations spiralled into acts of violence and that the original calls for reform became a sequence of destructive extremist acts. She noted that, "protests spread into schools, hospitals and communities," and all the while, opposition groups refused to join the government in a collaborative dialogue to achieve a legally binding referendum for peace and reform.

After protesters forced the closure of Bahrain's Financial Harbor, the government called on the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) Peninsula Shield Force to bolster infrastructure. Ambassador Nonoo said, "The anarchy we saw left our police forces overstretched. We called in Gulf Cooperation Council support to help maintain Bahrain's security and stability. There was no other option."

Ambassador Nonoo concluded, "A political solution is within everyone's interest, so that significant further reform can be achieved, and with it, a stable, political settlement for Bahrain...But, this can only be done in a stable and secure environment where all of Bahrain's communities feel safe."

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Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United States

Contact: Art Swift

(202) 744-9045

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.
Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Political parties Not Being Dissolved, Says Foreign Minister

Manama, April 15, 2011 -- Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa said today that reports of the dissolution of political societies in the island kingdom are incorrect. Al Wefaq party members resigned from their parliamentary seats several weeks ago and elections will be held to fill those seats, the Foreign Minister said.

Sheikh Khalid clarified the matter on his official Twitter feed:

"Bahrain is not seeking to dissolve political societies, official statement was incorrect," Sheikh Khalid wrote. "It's a court case against violations committed by the societies. In accordance with the constitution, elections will be held to fill seats vacated by Alwefaq. All societies, including Alwefaq are encouraged to participate in elections and serve the people through parliament."

####

Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United States

Contact: Art Swift

(202) 744-9045

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. For additional information, contact the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Bahrain King: We're open for business

MANAMA—April 21, 2011—Bahrain's King Hamad called for more United States involvement in the country's education sector and in jobs creation.

"The rationale is simple: The prerequisite to better paying jobs is a world-class education," he said.

King Hamad bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa's opinion editorial in the Washington Times Tuesday welcomed U.S. participation in Bahrain's development.

"An integral element of any support for Bahrain should be a scholarship program for Bahrainis from all walks of life to obtain their undergraduate and graduate degrees in the United States," he said.

The king also emphasized the need for U.S. assistance with training new recruits for Bahrain's police force and army. In the article, he proposed a joint U.S.-GCC training effort to fund the program and get it underway.

"When I was a student at the Army War College in Ft. Leavenworth, Kan., it was very clear to me that the American experience was a model well worth emulating," he said. "The events that have unfolded since February offer new opportunities for both of our countries."

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Sources: Washington Times, Gulf Daily News

Contact: Rose Sager

(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Bahrain's Minister of Finance Stresses Improvements

Washington, April 22 -- Bahrain's Minister of Finance, Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohamed Al-Khalifa, said this week that Bahrain is on the mend as it continues to make economic strides in the wake of recent protests.

In a speech at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Al-Khalifa noted that in the last decade Bahrain has pursued a reformist agenda, including a referendum on the constitution, the establishment of a bicameral parliament, and the separation of executive, judicial, and legislative powers. Al-Khalifa cited 67.7% voter turnout in the last election as an indication of popular participation in and enthusiasm for Bahraini politics. Al-Khalifa also mentioned that the bicameral parliament allows representation and participation of minorities, women, and professional groups, thus creating a necessary balance.

In reference to recent unrest and protests in Bahrain, Al-Khalifa recalled that on February 19 the crown prince ordered the immediate withdrawal of the military from Manama's Pearl Roundabout -- which has been at the center of recent anti-government protests -- and called for peaceful dialogue with the opposition. The minister stated that accurate media coverage would show that a majority of Bahrainis actually demonstrated in support of the government.

Turning to economic improvements, Al-Khalifa noted that Bahrain invests heavily into its society. He stressed that the Economic Development Board, which oversees the budgetary cycle, has put forth the Vision 2030 plan, a blueprint for Bahrain's long-term economic development. He highlighted that Bahrain's unemployment rate is only 3.6 percent and that 80 percent of the Bahraini budget comes from oil revenues, allowing the government to provide universal healthcare and education.

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Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Art Swift

(202) 744-9045

This has been issued by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. For additional information, contact the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Acting Health Minister Confirms Bahraini Hospitals Functioning Normally

MANAMA, April 12 – In a press conference at the Information Affairs Authority yesterday, Social Development Minister and Acting Health Minister Dr. Fatima Al Balushi stressed that medical centers are operating normally and emphasized the need for restored public confidence in the sector.

"Unquestionably, trust in our health service, for all who require it, is a pre-requisite for continuity and reliability of service," Dr. Al Balushi said. "We have never spared any effort to provide the best possible service to citizens and residents in Bahrain."

As a precautionary step, the ministry suspended several staff that appeared to have violated regulations and state laws over the past few months while the ministry investigates the matter, she said. However, Salmaniya Medical Complex's volume of work and level of patients remain normal and investigations have not interfered with medical treatment.

"All citizens and residents can take advantage of these services without discrimination," she said. "I can assure you all that all medical staff and Ministry staff will at all times provide a professional service, based on principles of humanity, honesty, sincerity, dedication and professionalism."

Presented with challenges from recent unrest, the health ministry refocused by working collectively, remaining true to its mission and ensuring lessons were learned. Currently, the industry is resuming planned medical expansions, which had been previously postponed.

"Recent events in Bahrain have taught us as a Ministry many lessons and, I believe, given the Ministry the strength and resilience to provide an even stronger service to those in need of health care in Bahrain," she said.

###

Source: Bahrain News Agency

Contact: Rose Sager

(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Bahrain's Ambassador to the U.S.: Reforms and Progress Will Continue

MANAMA, April 13—With a situation different from other countries experiencing unrest in the Middle East, Bahrain faces more complex and time-consuming solutions, Bahraini Ambassador to the U.S., Houda Nonoo writes in an editorial published yesterday in "The Hill."

"After eight weeks of unrest in Bahrain, one thing has become abundantly clear: Bahrain's situation is much more complicated than that of other Arab countries that have experienced mass demonstrations recently, and that is why there are no simple solutions," she writes.

While unrest in other countries has been determined by a united front, no common thread unites Bahrain's opposition, such as a lack of representation in the parliament, she writes. The government has continually pressed for a National Dialogue so that "everything is on the table," only to be refused by the opposition parties who insist on preconditions that will limit the discussion, according to Ambassador Nonoo.

"I am confident that as the protestors see life returning to normal in Bahrain - banks have reopened, students have returned to class and traffic is flowing again - that they will come to the table to make Bahrain stronger than ever," she said.

A state of reform is not new to the country. Since 2002 Bahrain has worked to build democracy and reforms, establishing a constitutional monarchy, electing a parliament, and creating municipal councils. The country is currently a young democracy and while the pace of reforms may not be as quick as desired, they are "genuine and permanent," the Ambassador says.

"Our greatest aspiration is for all of our citizens to believe that their government represents them - that they can realize their ambitions and gain redress for their grievances as Bahraini citizens equal before the law," she writes.

As Bahrain looks to the future, the country will continue to prize its relationship with the United States and value the association with "the world's greatest democracy."

"Our relationship with the United States is one of our most important, and we believe that it must be based not only on shared security interests, but also on shared values and aspirations," she writes. "Our emerging democracy may never look like American democracy, but the United States is our great example as we fashion our own system."

Ultimately, Bahrain's long tradition of tolerance and moderation will pull the country through this difficult time, Ambassador Nonoo writes.

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Source: The Hill

Contact: Rose Sager

(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Bahrain Lessens Nightly Curfew in Capital

MANAMA, March 23 -- Bahrain said today it is easing the curfew here, amidst an improving security situation.

The General Command of the Bahrain Defence Force announced that the curfew hours for select areas in the capital city of Manama were being cut to just six hours, from 10 am to 4 pm.

Bahrain's military rulers originally imposed a 12 hour curfew which was cut to eight hours last week.

Now the curfew will run just six hours until further notice, the statement said. It added that the reason for the relaxation of the curfew was "due to the improvement in security situation in the mentioned area."

Bahrain declared a state of national security on March 15 after troops from Saudi Arabia and the UAE arrived to help subdue protests that have gripped the Gulf state since mid-February.

Bahrain's Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa said on Monday that his country would emerge stronger from the uprisings.

He said the kingdom would "overcome the current circumstance" thanks to the wise leadership of King Hamad as well as the "resolve and patriotism of the Bahraini people".

"The kingdom will emerge stronger and more determined," he said in comments published by state news agency BNA.

####

Source: Arabian Business.com

Contact: Rose Sager

(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Gulf Daily News Clarifies Bahrain's State of National Safety, Says Current Security Level is a "Step Down" from Martial Law

MANAMA (March 28, 2011) - The current state of national safety is the "lesser of two emergencies," according to Gulf Daily News. In the article "State of National Safety 'lesser of two emergencies'" published on March 28, Gulf Daily News interviewed Fareed Ghazi, a former member of Bahrain's parliament who explains the implications of the security measure.

The current security level, called for by His Majesty King Hamad, can last up to three months from the day it is declared. Should the Kingdom exhibit a return to normalcy the security measure can also be ended prematurely, and conversely extended if the state of emergency continues after the allotted three months.

Gulf Daily News asserted, "The State of National Safety is a step down from declaring Martial Law, in which both the constitution and all national legislation can be suspended while the military runs the country."

Bahraini lawyer and former Member of Parliament Fareed Ghazi notes that the constitution and national legislation are not subject to suspension under the state of emergency. "Everything goes on normally in the country, except the rule of law comes under the military ruler," said Mr. Ghazi.

Mr. Ghazi explains the dynamic between Bahrain's two branches of power during states of national safety and says the executive and judiciary branches, "function as normal without their authority being turned over to the military, which can order those powers to take whatever steps necessary to ensure safety."

The specific security level elevates the power of the ruler who can "order arrests without getting warrants from the Public Prosecution" says Mr. Ghazi, noting that responding to threats towards people and property "requires fast action."

Gulf Daily News explains, "Under the current State of National Safety, BDF Commander-in-Chief Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa has been delegated by His Majesty to take steps to protect people's safety and national security."

Mr. Ghazi concludes that the legislature, "which includes parliament and the Shura Council, was not affected under a State of National Safety."

Source: Gulf Daily News

Contact: Rose Sager

(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Bahrain Prime Minister Proposes Several Large Government-Funded Development Projects

MANAMA, March 31 -- His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa yesterday announced a series of mega building projects may be forthcoming.

The Prime Minister said he has commissioned feasibility studies for a number of projects to bolster the nation's infrastructure and return the country to economic prosperity.

"The huge development schemes are aimed at re-energizing the national economy and ensuring it more edge," he said.

He instructed concerned authorities to suggest a list of such projects along with their estimated costs and deadlines.

"The priority should be put first and foremost on housing and infrastructure," the Prime Minister said during a work meeting.

This initiative is part of a series of proposals by the government to return Bahrain to normalcy. Earlier this month the Crown Prince called on all opposition groups to enter a National Dialogue and explore ways to foster reform in Bahrain.

In other developments, the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) has been instructed to provide more help to businesses in overcoming negative repercussions resulting from the unrest.

The Prime Minister directed CBB officials to co-ordinate extra measures with banks and financial institutions to help the private sector regain its pivotal role as a driving force of the national economy.

"The government is working hard for the economy to emerge stronger and surmount any negative repercussions," he said.

Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United States

Contact: Art Swift

(202) 744-9045

This has been issued by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Bahraini Medical Complex Reports Missing Medicine, Suspects Foul Play to Fabricate Violence During Protests

MANAMA (April 5, 2011) - Gulf Daily News reports that a large stash of medical supplies from Bahrain's Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) has gone missing. The Medical Complex had been used as an operations center for the political opposition groups during the recent protests.

According to the recent Gulf Daily News report, "More than 5,000 vials of drugs and other medicine went missing from Bahrain's main hospital during a siege by anti-government protesters."

During the protester's siege, the medical complex was one of many places affected. Protesters also blocked off major highways and government buildings and caused the shutdown of Bahrain's financial harbor.

The publication notes that the drugs and other medicine "were allegedly taken from Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC) by demonstrators who used them to simulate the symptoms of exposure to nerve gas."

Health Ministry Arab Board training coordinator Dr Nabeel Ansari said that certain individuals utilized the pharmaceuticals to fabricate violence. "Patients took the drugs so they could claim the chemical agent was being used by Bahrain's security forces," Dr. Ansari said.

According to an accident and emergency department consultant at the Salmaniya Medical Complex, the medical heist was part of a opposition campaign aimed at distributing falsified information about events on the ground in Bahrain to the international media.

Source: Gulf Daily News

Contact: Rose Sager

(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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Bahrain's Ambassador to the United States Discusses Current State of the Kingdom, Indicates Internal Progress

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 6, 2011) – The Kingdom of Bahrain's Ambassador to the United States Houda Nonoo spoke today with the Women Ambassadors Foundation at Howard University to discuss Bahrain's progress and return to normalcy since a period of recent unrest in the country.

Ambassador Nonoo indicated that progress was being made in Bahrain and noted that her nation is "definitely on the mend." She detailed that, "Financial centers have reopened, including banks and the stock market" and that "Students have returned to school and traffic is flowing again."

In an effort to spearhead democratic reforms, Bahrain's Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has asked parties in Bahrain to take part in a national dialogue. Ambassador Nonoo remarked, "We need this dialogue to take us to the next level of democratic accomplishment. So far, the opposition forces have not been willing to come to the table and talk about their grievances."

Ambassador Nonoo concluded, "I am honored to represent such a beautiful nation with a high standard of living. We have work to do, but we are on a path of democracy and our goals are clear."

FULL TEXT OF SPEECH:

Speech to Women Ambassadors Foundation at Howard University
Ambassador Houda Nonoo
6 April 2011

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I am truly pleased to be here this morning. I would like to thank Dr. Marilyn Sephcole, president of the Women Ambassadors Foundation, for her gracious invitation. I am honored to be in the presence of so many esteemed ambassadors today. Thank you, ladies.

I would also like to thank James Wyche, provost of the University, for his warm hospitality here at Howard.

I am proud to be Bahrain's ambassador to the United States, a position I have held since July 2008. Prior to engaging in public service, I ran a business with my husband. In 2004 I was a founding member of a human rights society and was elected as its Secretary General. I was then appointed to the Upper House of Parliament, before becoming

Ambassador to the United States, Canada, Brazil and Mexico. And I'm still waiting to present my credentials in Argentina!

Being an Ambassador has been a rewarding job, which has allowed me to meet with fascinating and stimulating people. It's never contained a moment of boredom. My primary duties as ambassador consist of representing the Kingdom of Bahrain in the United States and other countries. This includes meeting with elected officials on Capitol Hill to discuss bilateral relations, telling the story of Bahrain through speeches such as this one and hosting events to promote the kingdom as a center of commerce and industry in the Arabian Gulf.

Bahrain is a unique country in that it is home to Bahraini Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Jews and Ba'hais. And our places of worship stand next to each other. I myself am from the Jewish community. So not only does Bahrain have a female ambassador, but we also have a female Jewish ambassador. The first one in the Arab world!

As you most likely know, Bahrain is undergoing a period of change at the present time. Since February 14, we have been experiencing upheaval, started by a small group of young people who were trying to emulate what was happening in other Arab countries. This demonstration was soon taken over by people with a different agenda. Sadly, this group does not represent the majority of the country or anything close to it.

The good news is that Bahrain is slowly returning to normal. Financial centers have reopened, including banks and the stock market. Businesses have started functioning. Students have returned to school and traffic is flowing again. Shoppers are at the malls. Bahrain is definitely on the mend.

Our crown prince has asked all parties in Bahrain to participate in a national dialogue to explore future reforms, without any preconditions. Bahrain is a young democracy that is a work in progress. We need this dialogue to take us to the next level of democratic accomplishment. So far, the opposition forces have not been willing to come to the table and talk about their grievances. This is unfortunate, as we need all Bahrainis to propel this country ahead this decade.

As our country moves forward, I am quite hopeful that we will continue our tradition of being one of the most progressive societies in the Arab world. Women, for example, have always had their rights in Bahrain. We have women parliamentarians, ministers, undersecretaries, bank managers, teachers and even taxi drivers! It is a great time for women in our island nation.

During my time here, it has always been exciting to be Ambassador to the United States because the U.S. and Bahrain have historically enjoyed very close ties. We are home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet. Thousands of U.S. military personnel have lived in Bahrain and thoroughly enjoyed their experience. These men and women are actually the best ambassadors Bahrain could ever have, as they promote our nation wherever they go.

Although I know there are many challenges ahead, Bahrain is undergoing an evolution rather than a revolution.

I am honored to represent such a beautiful nation with a high standard of living. We have work to do, but we are on a path of democracy and our goals are clear. Thank you ladies and gentlemen. Please enjoy the rest of today's presentations.

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This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. More information is available at the United States Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Bahraini Businessmen Detail Improving Situation at Home

Washington, April 6 – The situation on the ground in Bahrain is improving, according to two Bahraini businessmen in an interview with Al-Sahafa, an Arab-American newspaper.

In “Unveiling the Truth: Eye Witnesses Describing the Situation in Bahrain from a Business Perspective,” Khalid Al Ameen, board member for the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Jihad Amin, managing director of House of Travel in Bahrain, discuss the current state of Bahrain and what the unrest and recovery mean for the island kingdom moving forward.

“The government and the King are doing a beautiful job,” Al Ameen said. “They have instituted reforms. These reforms included education, health reform, and economic reforms ... Bahrain is operating well, Bahrain is safe, and Bahrain is peaceful.”

Jihad Amin chronicled how the protests upended Bahrain for a brief while. “The protests have disrupted everything,” Amin said. “They have blocked streets, stopped people from going to school and made people go on strike. But Bahrain is on the mend and will be stronger than ever.”

The businessmen discussed how the Crown Prince has now received proposals to increase infrastructure development in the country and to propel the economy further in the wake of the unrest. They also mentioned how the Crown Prince has called all sides to the table to negotiate a lasting peace and greater reforms for the country.

Full text of the article may be found at <http://al-sahafa.us/images/AlsaahafaNewspaperApril2011.pdf>

Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Art Swift

(202) 683-3108

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Additional information is available from the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.

Bahraini Crown Prince Advocates National Unity as Building Block for Bahrain's Future

MANAMA, April 8 -- National unity will lead Bahrain out of its current unrest, Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa said yesterday in an address to the nation. In the speech broadcast on Bahrain Television, the Crown Prince called for unity so that the country can move forward with reforms and building a better future through modernization and development.

"Today, we must embed the concept of respect for the rule of law and co-existence. We must affirm the concept of justice and the value of working together towards development and progress and away from division and extremism," Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa said.

According to the Crown Prince, division threatens stability and progress while also impinging on the government's ability to effectively implement reforms. Although the work of constitutional institutions has previously been obstructed, they will continue to participate in King Hamad's reform project, he said.

"At this time, we must emphasize the established principles that all of us believe and have attained from the reform project... I will not spare any effort in participating, as honored and assigned by His Majesty the King, to the progress of this reform," he said.

The Crown Prince thanked the Bahrain Defence Force, the police and the National Guard for reinstating security and ensuring the safety of all citizens today and also expressed confidence in the nation's future.

"The future is bright for all of us and opportunities are there for all. It is based on this principle that we must move forward -- it is the rock upon which we build the future of our country and future generations."

The full speech can be seen [here](#).

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Source: Bahrain News Agency

Contact: Rose Sager

(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Additional information is available from the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Bahraini Blogger: Crown Prince Deserves Praise

Manama, April 11 – In response to the Crown Prince's address to the nation about the need for national unity, prominent Bahraini blogger Suhail Ghazi Algosaibi has published "An Open Letter to HRH The Crown Prince: A Letter from a Fan." The letter details Algosaibi's passion for reform and restoration in Bahrain. Full text of the letter is as follows:

"Your Royal Highness,

Thank you for your recent appearance on television. So many of us have been waiting for you to reappear, and to lead the healing process.

I applaud your efforts in trying to bring a resolution to the February 14th crisis, which has left a deep wound in our society. Despite the opposition's arrogance, you've persisted in trying to bring a win-win resolution to the crisis. God bless you. In the end they've shown their true colours, and *no one* can fault you for your efforts.

We are so proud of you.

Your Royal Highness, sectarianism and hate have ripped through this beautiful country. The social damage it has done is far more severe than the political damage. It has affected friendships and families. For the first time people are asking what sect someone comes from before doing business with them. There is so much work that needs to be done, so much pain that needs to be nursed.

But God willing we will overcome this. I know it will be hard, but I also know that doing the right thing is never easy. United we can make Bahrain stronger than it ever was.

Your Royal Highness, I'm sure you've been getting lots of advice, – and I don't know if you're in the mood to hear anymore – but allow me to add my own humble thoughts.

The messages of hate and sectarianism that came from some of the opposition leaders found a fertile ground. The government, and indeed the Bahraini society as a whole, must ask itself why we have so many young men and women in our society that have nothing to lose? We have to ask ourselves why does a section of our society feel victimised and so ready to hate?

It is my humble contention that we must remove all causes for hate so that we never have to experience such a crisis again.

Thank you again for all your efforts during this crisis. I cannot imagine how painful it must have been for you. Your wisdom, patience and resilience during this crisis were nothing short of remarkable.

I for one am not surprised by your unique character...

For you are your father's son.

God bless Bahrain.

Yours,

Suhail Ghazi Algosaibi.”

Full text of the letter may be found at [Suhail Algosaibi's Radical Dojo](#)

SOURCE: Suhail Algosaibi's Radical Dojo

Contact: Rose Sager

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Bahrain Medical Society President Sets Record Straight About Alleged Abuses

Washington, May 17, 2011 – Anti-government protesters blocked access to a key medical facility in Bahrain, denying treatment to Bahraini residents in need, said the president of the Bahrain Medical Society.

In an interview on a visit to Washington, Dr. Nabeel AlAnsari, a private citizen, asserted that media reports fueled by anti-government opposition forces are incorrect.

"The protesters took over the Salmaniya Medical Complex and occupied it for four weeks," Dr. AlAnsari said. "They used this as a base to riot and prevent people from accessing the hospital."

Dr. AlAnsari said that media reports that stated that the government was blocking the hospital and denying care to sick Bahrainis in need were incorrect.

According to Dr. AlAnsari, "During those four weeks, there were a lot of deaths from people who were staying at home because they feared going to the hospital. Also, ambulance services were denied to people who needed them because the ambulance services were controlled and run by the demonstrators."

The situation became dire when patients with serious conditions were not able to receive the treatment they needed, Dr. Al Ansari commented.

"There were a lot voices screaming at the government to do something," Dr. AlAnsari said. "We need to be able to get to health care. There are a lot of oncology patients, and Salmaniya Medical Complex is the only oncology center in the country, so people with cancer cannot go anywhere else except there. Some of the patients need to be treated twice a week, depending on what kind of regimen of treatment they have. Some patients need dialysis twice a week, and this was the main center for getting treatment. A lot of people suffered from complications because they did not have access to the hospital or its services."

Dr. AlAnsari said that finally government agencies intervened and order was restored to the hospital.

"They made sure the area was clear and access to health care has been reopened," Dr. AlAnsari said. "What happened during that period, those four weeks, set Bahrain back a few years. Now we are starting to restore what we lost and move forward."

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